

The President's Daily Brief

October 9, 1976



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LATE ITEM

Wall posters appeared in Peking today saying that Hua Kuo-feng had been appointed Chairman of the Communist Party, according to a press report.

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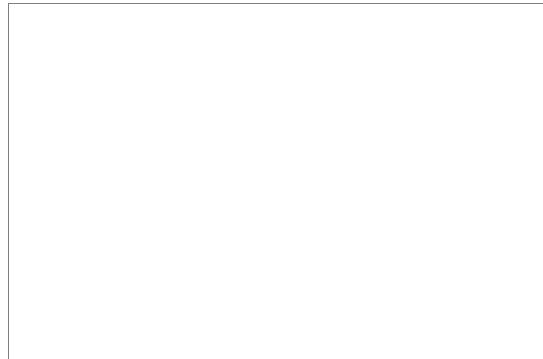
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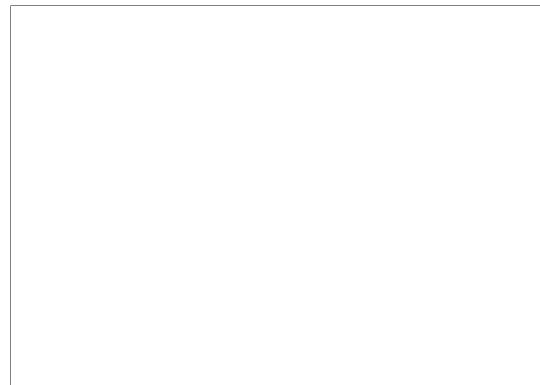
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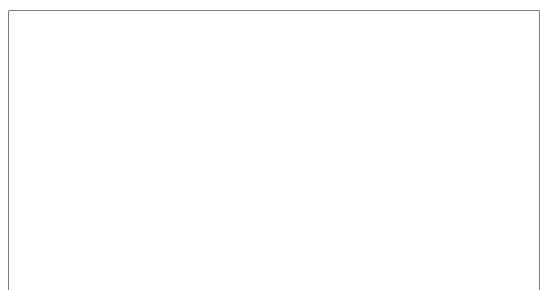


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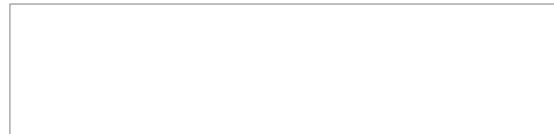


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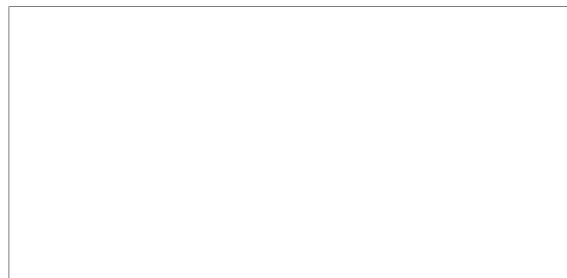
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LEBANON: Palestinians and leftists are continuing to brace for a Syrian-Christian offensive, despite talk of a possible renewal of negotiations between representatives of the Syrians, the Palestinians, and Lebanese President Sarkis.

Arab League mediator Hasan Sabri al-Khuli announced yesterday that Damascus had agreed to attend another round of talks today. The Syrians have not yet named a delegate to the conference, however, and it is possible that they have no intention of attending.

Most reports indicate that the Syrians expect nothing to come of continued contacts with the Palestinians, and are planning to resume military operations in the near future.



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Although the Syrians could agree to attend a new round of talks as a public relations exercise--they have typically been careful to place the onus for stalemated negotiations on the Palestinians--new discussions are unlikely to produce a breakthrough.

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Saudi Arabia has begun the withdrawal of its combat forces from Syria, a move that has been under consideration since early this year.

About 6,000 Saudi troops have been in Syria since the October 1973 war. According to the US defense attache in Damascus, about 200 troops will remain in Syria to support the small Saudi peace-keeping force in Lebanon.

The US embassy believes that Saudi Arabia, whose wealth and prestige have increased significantly since 1973, may no longer see a need to station a token force in the confrontation area in order to demonstrate its leadership in the Arab world.

The Saudis may also be concerned that they would be drawn into the Lebanese fighting. Saudi troops are already serving with the Arab peacekeeping forces in Lebanon, and it would be difficult for Riyadh to refuse requests for additional troops so long as it had units stationed nearby in Syria.

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CHINA: A reference in Chinese media to the Politburo "headed by Comrade Hua Kuo-feng" tends to boost Hua's public stature but probably does not mean that an official decision has been made to name him the new head of the party.

Until the use of this terminology yesterday, the media had been scrupulous in referring to Hua by his official title as first vice chairman of the party. Hua has headed the party since Mao's death on September 9, and the use of this new formulation only confirms a situation that has existed for the last month.

The decision to refer to Hua as heading the Politburo, in pronouncements aimed at both domestic and foreign audiences, raises somewhat his political stock and could prove useful when the party meets formally to name a new leader.

The Politburo, which apparently met for a few weeks following Mao's death, seems to have resolved some of the immediate questions posed by that event. Peking announced yesterday that Mao's body will be put on public display in a memorial hall in Peking. The delay in making this announcement suggests the disposition of his body may have been a contentious issue.

Peking also announced yesterday preparations for the publication of the collected works of Mao. Mao's works have never been compiled and published in their entirety, and this undertaking may prove to be politically sensitive. There is undoubtedly much in Mao's as yet unpublished works that various party leaders may prefer to keep out of the public eye.

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USSR-ANGOLA: General Secretary Brezhnev and Angolan President Neto signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation yesterday in Moscow.

The USSR has concluded such treaties with only a few third-world countries--India, Egypt, Iraq, and Somalia. The text of the new treaty has not yet been published, but a Tass summary indicates that it generally follows the format and substance of the other treaties with third-world states, outlining a commitment to cooperation in a wide variety of fields.

Neto's talks in Moscow have apparently focused on strengthening party ties and on the needs of Angola's economy. The Angolans seem anxious to see Moscow play a greater role in their country's post-war development, but Neto has also been making efforts to expand ties with the West--most recently exchanging ambassadors with Sweden and resuming diplomatic relations with Portugal.

The treaty apparently provides for strengthening military cooperation--implying continued Soviet military aid. It is possible that under this clause the Soviets will try to gain access to military facilities in Angola, but there are indications that Neto will resist.

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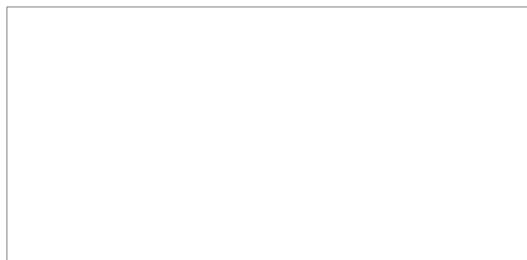
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The leadership of Italy's Christian Democratic Party will convene this weekend for its first full-scale strategy session since the parliamentary election in June.

Debate is certain to center on the question of how to manage relations between Prime Minister Andreotti's Christian Democratic minority government and the Communist Party, whose parliamentary cooperation is essential to Andreotti's survival.

Many Christian Democrats believe that Andreotti is leaving too many important details of his economic program to parliament, which is leading to Christian Democratic - Communist collusion in the legislature.

Some party members are concerned that the precedents being set by the Prime Minister could lay the basis for Communist chief Berlinguer's "historic compromise"--a governing partnership between the two parties. 25X1



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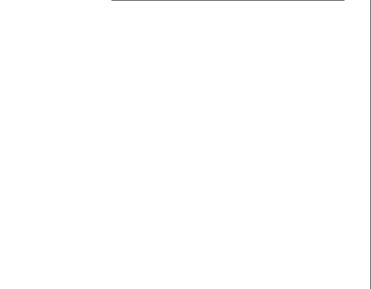
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The nationwide strike in France on Thursday, called to protest Prime Minister Barre's economic stabilization program, failed to elicit the massive labor support the strike organizers had anticipated.

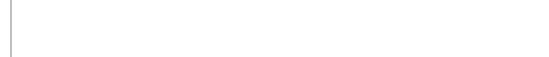
The US embassy estimates that some 75,000 demonstrators participated in a protest march in Paris. Although the turnout was greater than that of similar demonstrations over the past few years, the crowds appeared dispirited and poorly organized.

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France

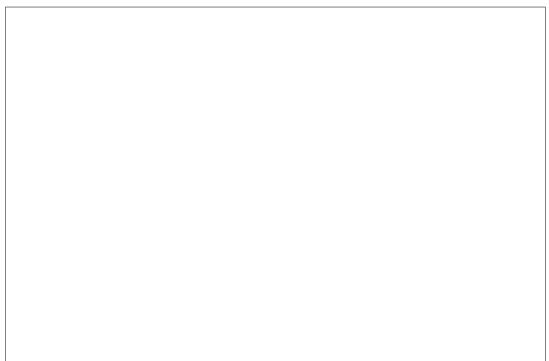


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Settlement of Jamaica's two-year contract dispute with Alcoa earlier this week brings the country's bauxite and alumina operations under closer government control.

Under the agreement, Jamaica will:

--purchase a 6-percent share-- worth about \$10 million--in a new joint company that will operate Alcoa's Jamaican bauxite and aluminum properties;

--buy all of Alcoa's mining and non-operating lands, worth about \$2.5 million;

--settle disputes through private international arbitration.

The agreement also brings Jamaica closer to settlements with Kaiser and Reynolds, which probably will be completed by the end of this year.

The government's agreement to reduce the bauxite production tax-- which could cost it as much as \$13 million in revenues next year-- reflects a desire to encourage companies to increase their Jamaican operations, which now account for nearly two fifths of US bauxite and alumina supplies.

The companies are disturbed by past moves to boost taxes, which have doubled the cost of imported bauxite to the United States to \$20 to \$25 per ton, and are also disturbed by mounting civil unrest to which they see no end. Instead, they are diversifying their supply sources by investing in Australia, Brazil, and Indonesia.

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